



For Immediate Release
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**STATE REVEALS SUMMER PLANS TO CONTROL
INVASIVE PLANTS IN LAKE COCHITUATE**

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) today described its preliminary plans for controlling invasive plants in Lake Cochituate for this summer and summer 2007.

A complete plant survey of the lake, including Fisk Pond, will be conducted in June. Based on data from this survey, DCR will decide on specific actions to be carried out in each of the three basins of the Lake and in Fisk Pond. One of DCR's top priorities is to carry out a scientific trial of Solar Bee pond circulators, two of which have been donated to DCR for the duration of the study. Due to orders from the Conservation Commissions of Natick and Wayland, DCR will currently be limiting its control efforts to non-chemical techniques.

"DCR's goal is to halt and reverse the spread of aquatic invasive plants," said DCR Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington. "These invasive species have already had a negative impact on the lake's biodiversity, made conditions more dangerous for swimmers and boaters, and decreased the aesthetic value of the lake. We must take action, within the constraints imposed by the Conservation Commission orders, to prevent the situation from worsening."

Other techniques to control the invasive plants may include the installation of benthic matting to protect swimmers from entanglement; a limited amount of diver-assisted suction harvesting and hand pulling; a boat ramp monitor to inform the public about invasive species, and to check incoming and outgoing boats for plant material; and, a pilot study of milfoil weevils at various locations. The results of the June plant survey will determine where these techniques will be used, and to what extent.

DCR will schedule a public meeting in late June or early July to inform interested parties on the results of the plant survey and the status of DCR's control efforts.

Three invasive species of aquatic plants were discovered in Lake Cochituate's South Pond in the summer of 2002. This was particularly noteworthy, as water in Lake Cochituate flows from south to north, and would thus help the plants spread throughout the lake. Though the presence of all three invasive plants is cause for concern, Eurasian milfoil demands particular attention, as it is the most aggressive of the three—it spreads rapidly and out-competes indigenous plants, potentially impacting the ecology of the entire lake. Non-chemical methods of control commenced in August 2003.

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